

# In the Woman's World

## HOW VIRGINIA BROOKS WON FIGHT AGAINST VICE IN INDIANA TOWN

An idea that seems to be held by women interested in uplift work here is that the duties of helping and "sistering" girls who are bad or who show tendencies to drift towards that which is not good, should be left to mature married women, women who have had a great deal of experience. The following story of Virginia Brooks, twenty-four years old, who is known as the "Joan of Arc of West Hammond, Indiana," is rather a good argument that young women can do as much good with the portion of a city where vice and crime reign as can one of older years.

Her friends and associates knew Virginia Brooks as a fun-loving, happy girl, and that she should take to reforming a section of a town that was as bad as West Hammond never occurred to them. It really never occurred to her until she and her mother received a letter from the trustees of West Hammond as they called themselves, saying that they were to make a great many improvements in the little town and a special assessment of the people was to be made. The Brooks' share was to be twenty-five thousand dollars.

When such a demand was made, Virginia decided that a great many improvements were indeed to be made.

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great many threatening letters. She did not seem to mind but went on with her work of reform.

Put in Jail.

At one time she, with a number of other women, were attacked by the police and she was cast into jail. The gang, however, that had placed her there did not reckon with the Poles who were her friends, and at five o'clock she was released from the dirty cell into which she had been cast. During her investigation she discovered that the dives should be banished. This was easier said than done. She posted huge red signs in conspicuous places bearing the following inscription: "Warning to Dives—20 Days to vacate—Virginia Brooks." At first the owners of the dives laughed, but thinking of the other work the girl had accomplished they decided to close up for a short time and move into Hammond. At the end of the twenty days, Virginia, with a policeman, went through one of the places and when asking for the owner was told that he had gone over the line into Hammond. The following week the Searchlight came out asking for the photograph of this man so that he might be prosecuted.

This dive problem was one of the largest that confronted the girl and it was dear to her heart. She wanted them to be entirely eradicated. She found that some of the most respected citizens of West Hammond owned the property where the dives existed and when asked to address one of the women's clubs in Hammond, she gave the names of these men and the wives who were in the room became very angry and left the meeting. Some of the women, however, offered to help in the work but said they did not want to have anything to do with the dives. Success at Last.

The girl was untiring in her work, and though there were very dark days, she succeeded at last. She was elected president of societies and was given a great deal of honor. This she was not particular about. She wanted to make West Hammond a clean city and she succeeded. The notoriety which the little town received reached other cities and the people were anxious to see the girl win her fight. She won. The struggle lasted two years but she felt that the result was worth it. In December, 1910, the fight commenced and in 1912 the battle was won. Now she is the same light-hearted girl she was before her reform work. And people who visit the Brooks' little cottage are willing to listen to a talk on reform because they know that when the talk is over they will be entertained by the talented Virginia, who is an accomplished musician.

Those who believe that a young girl cannot aid in reform are sadly mistaken for often her very youth and enthusiasm will enlist the aid and sympathy of many who are able to cooperate.

### 'TOURIST' REHEARSALS

D. William Douthitt, who will produce the Hawaiian-made opera "The Tourist" during the Floral Parade carnival, announces rehearsals tonight and Thursday night at 7:30 p. m. The rehearsals are progressing favorably and although some changes have had to be made in the cast an chorus because of unavoidable reasons, several well-known singers have appeared and the entire production is now moving forward.

Good luck and bad habits are seldom on speaking terms.

## STICKY 'SAPHO' SMEARS SOUL IN STAIRCASE SCENE

Olga Nethersole's version of that unhealthful French play, "Sapho," was staged at the Bijou theatre last night by the World's Fair Stock Company. The version is adequate, the play carries the dark-brown taste and the gray-green feeling as powerfully here as it has all over America when Nethersole used it, and the Bijou will be well-filled during the two remaining nights of the show, undoubtedly. Nevertheless, the play seems to the critic unnecessary and cruelly emotional, and the only reason for putting it on here is the reason that kept it going so long in mainland theatres—box-office receipts.

The dignity of the original story—the dignity of a great passion torn on the bayonets of society and finally killed and cast aside, is largely lost in any stage presentation of the play. "Sapho" lived as a play because of the famous staircase scene, where Jean Gaussin carries Fanny Le Grande, the loved "Sapho" of poets and painters, up a flight of steps to her room. It lived because of the delusion that it is a naughty play. As a matter of fact, it is a sordid, sticky play, full of stale wickedness which is revolting because told without frillery of ray daring. Vice is stripped naked, and a great love is degraded into worn-out passion.

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## TEALS MAKE HIT AT THE POPULAR

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All the old favorites are back and the trip to the Orient has done them a great deal of good. The team work and choruses are better, the girls have lost none of their charms, the voices of the principals and chorus have all improved, and for a thirty-cent show it is a wonder. The place was called "The Gentleman from Australia," but old theatregoers saw something that reminded them of "What Happened to Smith."

Raymond Teal has a good specialty, his voice is excellent for a blackface comedian, and his parodies are clever and clean. There are few of the Willis Sweetnam brand of darkies left and Teal is one of them. His work is very similar to Sweetnam's and Luke Schoolcraft's. Little Sutherland has some good songs and with the chorus made a big hit in "I Want to Be Way

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Down in Dixie," George Cheesbro and Corinne Carkeek were clever as usual and the Bishop of Bellingham really looked like a bishop. The costumes of the show girls are neat and harmonious and they are amply filled. The labels on the suit cases which they bring in during one song bear evidence of some travelling. With burlesque at this house and drama at another, time ought not to hang heavy on anybody's hands.

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There wasn't a vacant seat at the first performance last night and a line was standing outside waiting for the second performance a half hour before the house was emptied.

All the old favorites are back and the trip to the Orient has done them a great deal of good. The team work and choruses are better, the girls have lost none of their charms, the voices of the principals and chorus have all improved, and for a thirty-cent show it is a wonder. The place was called "The Gentleman from Australia," but old theatregoers saw something that reminded them of "What Happened to Smith."

Raymond Teal has a good specialty, his voice is excellent for a blackface comedian, and his parodies are clever and clean. There are few of the Willis Sweetnam brand of darkies left and Teal is one of them. His work is very similar to Sweetnam's and Luke Schoolcraft's. Little Sutherland has some good songs and with the chorus made a big hit in "I Want to Be Way

As for the staircase scene, that was mercifully short. James Dillon, who had the role of the lover, Jean Gaussin, picked up Miss Virginia Brissac, "Sapho," and with evident care mounted about three steps with his burden. Curtain!

Now with Olga Nethersole there was no such haste to get the thing over. As the years passed and Miss Nethersole began to acquire flesh, the part of Jean Gaussin came to require more muscle than histrionic ability. The man who tackled that part used to carry Miss Nethersole up a long flight to a landing, turn, carry her a few steps more, and then slowly disappear along a gallery. It resembled a life-saving stunt for the movies rather than a romantic nocturnal adventure. Miss Brissac and Mr. Dillon, however, have but a few steps to go and they go them quite easily. It is all very effective for impressionable young persons. Elders fear lest a step should break or the valiant Mr. Dillon should stumble.

So much for the staircase scene. The play itself is the story of Sapho's love for Gaussin, his discovery of her past, his attempt to live with her, the failure of their domestic relations, and her final return to a former love for the sake of their child. She faces the rest of her life with the comment that all love, for Gaussin or anyone else, has been killed in her. It is a characteristically French story and never had any real mission or value on the American stage.

The play is pretty well done by the stock company, Miss Brissac and Mr. Dillon sharing the honors. John G. Wray has practically no chance and the same may be said of most of the others. Howard Nugent does commendable work as an elderly Frenchman with ideas of high life still under his sparse hairs. There is a Spanish dance in the first act that is short but good. The cast:

Jean Gaussin ..... James Dillon  
M. Dechelette ..... Frank Cooley  
Caoudal ..... J. Lindley Phipps  
Flammant ..... John G. Wray  
Cesaire Gaussin ..... Howard Nugent  
De Potter ..... Rodney Brandt  
M. Du Maurier ..... Ray Hanford  
Cupid ..... John Elsworth  
Mons. Hettemia ..... Harry McLennan  
Concierge ..... Ernest Shipman  
Carrier ..... Ed. Harford  
Porter ..... Joe Howard  
Joseph ..... Ardell  
Divonne ..... Mary Gleeson  
Irene ..... Evelyn Hamby  
Mme. Hettemia ..... Margaret Nugent  
Francine ..... Ruth Van  
Alice Doree ..... Florence Worth  
Toto ..... Margaret Leslie  
Margot ..... Mabel Wyman  
Rose ..... Janet Gisson  
"Sapho" (Fanny Le Grande) ..... Virginia Brissac  
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